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Amendment
Attorney Docket No. S63.2P-10306-US01

Remarks

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action of July 2, 2004, wherein claims 32-38, 40 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. 6,325,826 to Vardi et al (hereinafter "Vardi"); and claim 39 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Vardi in view of U.S. 6,071,298 to Lashinski et al (hereinafter Lashinski).

The following comments are presented in the same order and with headings and paragraph numbers corresponding to the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

3. In the Office Action claims 32-38, 40 and 41 were rejected under §102(e) as being anticipated by Vardi. In the Office Action Vardi is said to describe a stent having a first section (12) a second section (15) and a plurality of linkage members (18). As recited above, the instant claims describe a bifurcated stent having a first stent section, a second stent section and at least four linkage members linking the first and second sections. The instant claims further recite that the linkage members are integral with both the first stent section and the second stent section. This is in contrast to Vardi, which illustrates in FIGs. 6d-6g, an assembly of two separate stent sections (12) and (15) of which *only* section (15) has linkage members (18) integral therewith.

Nowhere does the Vardi reference teach or suggest providing a bifurcated stent wherein the linkage members are integral to both stent sections as the instant claims recite. As a result the rejection is respectfully overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

4. In the Office Action claim 39 was rejected under §103(a) as being obvious over Vardi in view of Lashinski.

In the Office Action Lashinski is cited as teaching selectively annealing stent sections to obtain different yield strengths, and that it would be obvious to combine such teachings with those of Vardi. Neither reference however, alone or in any combination teaches or suggests a bifurcated stent wherein the linkage members are integral to both stent sections as

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the instant claims recite. Because the proposed addition of Lashinski to Vardi does nothing to address the failure of Vardi alone to teach or suggest all of the elements of the instant claims the rejection is respectfully overcome.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing it is believed that the present application, with claims 32-41 is in condition for allowance. Early action to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

VIDAS, ARRETT & STEINKRAUS

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